



Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Dept.
3140 N Street
Lincoln, NE 68510
Phone: (402)441-8021
<http://www.ci.lincoln.ne.us/city/health/envIRON/pollu/>

February 2004



Mercury Thermostat Recycling

Mercury and other heavy metals, improperly managed pose danger to human health and the environment. Common sources of mercury include thermometers, light bulbs, and thermostats. Used mercury thermostats have no place in our landfills and should be properly recycled. Replacing mercury thermostats with energy saving programmable electronic thermostats provides an opportunity to prevent pollution.

FACTS ABOUT THERMOSTATS CONTAINING MERCURY

- There are more than 50 million mercury-containing thermostats in homes across the United States. Mercury has been used in thermostats since the 1950's.
- A mercury-switch thermostat uses mercury in a sealed glass bulb. Each bulb contains approximately three grams of mercury, which is about the size of a dime.

(These facts provided by Honeywell, Inc.)

The following business will accept mercury thermostats:

Johnstone Supply

Ron McKenzie
2829 N. 33 Street
Lincoln, NE 68504
800-422-0108
Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM
*Will accept only thermostats that are enclosed in their original housing unit.



Proper Disposal of Mercury Thermometer and Fluorescent Light Bulbs



FACTS ABOUT MERCURY, MERCURY THERMOMETERS AND FLUORESCENT LIGHT BULBS

- Mercury looks silver in color and is an odorless liquid at room temperature. When it is heated, it becomes a colorless and odorless gas. Mercury is very toxic and attacks the body's central nervous system. It can also harm the brain, kidneys, and lungs.
- In pregnant women mercury can pass through the placenta where it affects fetal development.
- Mercury can enter your body by skin absorption, by breathing the vapors, and by eating mercury contaminated fish and shellfish.
- Mercury in garbage that is landfilled can seep into the groundwater or can be released into the air as a toxic vapor. Airborne mercury eventually falls to the earth, often into rivers and lakes.
- Each mercury fever thermometer contains approximately one gram of mercury.
- Nationwide, mercury thermometers contribute 17 tons of mercury to solid waste each year.
- **Thermometers with a red or blue liquid do NOT contain mercury**
- Most four-foot fluorescent light bulbs contain approximately 30 to 40 milligrams (about half a teaspoon) of mercury.

What alternatives are there for thermometers and fluorescent light bulbs that contain mercury?

For thermometers consider the following:

- Digital thermometers
- Flexible "forehead" thermometers



For Fluorescent light bulbs consider buying low-mercury, identified by "green tips".



The following business in Lincoln will accept mercury thermometers and/or fluorescent light bulbs. Please call:

Environmental Compliance Enterprises
1321 N 68 St
Lincoln, NE 68505
Phone : (402)483-9024

If you are a resident of Lincoln or Lancaster County mercury thermometers and fluorescent light bulbs can be brought to a Household Hazardous Waste Collection for proper disposal. For dates and locations call the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department at 441-8021.